

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 20, 2021

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: MARGARET ORLANDO & LAURA DURHAM, DIVISION CHIEFS
RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

SUBJECT: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE ITEM

All Recreation programs and events are modified to meet COVID-19 guidelines and best practices. All participants are screened for symptoms and must wear masks, physical distancing is required, and capacity is significantly reduced.

SUMMER UPDATE: Please use the following link to view [“Summer at a Glance”](#) with information about all summer programs, activities, and facilities. Summer camp registration is in progress. All sections of the Alex Fun Camp, Excel Soccer Camp, and PK Move are full, and registration in other arts, sports, and STEM camps is going well. The Modified Summer Camp Program at the recreation centers have filled at Nannie J. Lee, Patrick Henry, Charles Barrett, and Mt. Vernon; Charles Houston, William Ramsay, and Ferdinand Day have a few available spaces; Leonard Armstrong, Minnie Howard, John Adams, and GW are available.

Registration information for 2021-2022 afterschool programs will be going out the week of May 17 to previous participants and the general public for Fall 2021. Until such time as there is new information on Covid guidelines for schools and the use of recreation center space for ACPS, the program will remain in a modified status with limited enrollment. As guidelines change and space requirements are determined, the program locations will adjust as quickly as possible to expand enrollment. A pre-registration period will be held from June 14-19 for families requiring financial assistance. Once the pre-registration period ends, general registration will be held for the remaining spots on June 30.

Program Wrap-Ups

- **The Classes and Camps section** offered 94 different programs for all ages and interests! Some programs are taking advantage of our beautiful weather by being offered exclusively outdoors while others are in our facilities across the city. Some successful new programs include Ninja Reading Time (ages 1-5), Outdoor Zumba (ages 18 and older) and Family Yoga (ages 1-4 with parent).

- The **Durant Center** collaborated with the **Jefferson Houston art teachers** to provide an **Outdoor Art Exhibit** for a spring art display of their students work. Some of the work has been done while learning remotely, while others will be pieces that the students have completed now that they are back in person! We had over 130 art pieces from artists ranging from Kindergarten students to Middle School students. It was a wonderful community collaboration with the school!



Program Updates

- **Charles Houston** continues to offer **teen activities** and programs for youth starting at age 12. Several programs are lined up through the summer, including Arts and Eats, cooking activities, mentoring programs from Project Success, teen movie nights, and fitness.
- In partnership with the **Charles Houston Advisory Council**, the recreation center is hosting the **Welcome Summer Youth with Your Neighbors** event on May 15. Participants will enjoy outdoor games, art projects, and free healthy snacks including smoothies. This event will be fun for the whole family.
- **Intro and Intermediate Pickleball** classes continue to be very popular at the **Charles Houston** Recreation Center. Intro classes focus on the fundamentals of pickleball scoring, basic play, and rules. Intermediate classes focus on competitive play and teaches gamesmanship, footwork, weight transfer, and spin serves.
- **Charles Houston** offers free **recreation pop-ups** in several of our surrounding neighborhoods. Staff have been to Andrew Adkins Playground, Ruby Tucker, and Princess Square, with upcoming events at Oronoco Bay and Banjo Park. During these pop-ups staff provide light refreshments for the kids, arts & crafts as well as fun and engaging outdoor activities to get them up and moving. Additional pop-up programs are planned through June. On May 13th Oronoco Bay, May 18th Ruby Tucker, May 27th Andrew Adkins & June 2 Banjo Park.
- **The Nannie J. Lee TR Achieving Greatness** participants are enjoying fulfilled activities even though we are still in the mist of the pandemic. With spring in air, participants are enjoying more outdoor activities such as Nature Walks, Art on the Lawn, and Sensory Exploration in the Miracle Field. Participants also enjoyed the crafts they created for "Earth Day".



- **Patrick Henry Pop-up Rec** will continue throughout April on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at the center and in neighborhood parks bringing recreation to the community in outdoor spaces. Activities include games, exercise and fitness, and crafts for all ages.



- The **Flip First Tumbling** Winter session at **Patrick Henry** ended in April 2021. This program is open to both boys and girls of all skill levels to improve balance and agility, and tumble techniques through fun drills, games and interactive demonstrations. All mats will be numbered and sanitized daily before and after each use of the program.
- On Tuesday evenings during the month of April 2021 the **Roller Skating for Fitness/ Fun** class was held at the **Patrick Henry Center**. The participants learned how to roll! Instruction includes guidelines for safety, components of an inline and traditional quad roller skate, basic skating skills, proper techniques, and exercises. For beginners to intermediate.



- **Patrick Henry** expanded the **Modified Open Gym** days to Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings. The Patrick Henry Center continue to provide the Modified Open Gym for the teens in the community. All teen participants continue to practice social distance and face masks are worn throughout their visit on the center.

Upcoming Events

- **Charles Houston** is hosting its first **Dog Scavenger Hunt** on May 22. Want to go on a adventurous scavenger hunt this spring? Go out for a nice walk with Fido, while solving riddles that leads to tasty treats. Mask are required and COVID safety precautions will be implemented. We will meet and disperse at Banjo Park. This scavenger hunt is approximately 1.7 miles for our furry friends and owners. Rain date will be the following Saturday.

- The **Classes and Camps section** is excited for the return of our end of session **Dance Recitals** starting this spring at the Fort Ward Amphitheater. Participants in our Lee Center and Patrick Henry Ballet programs are allowed to invite 4 family members to watch them perform, complete with costumes and music! We are expecting 38 youth participants ranging in age from 3 to 10 years old.
- **Fee Classes and Camps Section** is collaborating with the Jefferson Houston art teachers to provide space for a spring art display of their students' work. Some of the work has been done while learning remotely, while others will be pieces that the students have completed now that they are back in person! Come walk through and take a look at the wonderful art pieces that will be hung on the fencing outside the basketball court and playgrounds by Durant Center from April 30 through May!
- **Patrick Henry** will offer many class programs for all ages including **Hip Hop Fitness & Circuit Training** for teens and adults that aid in firming and sculpting the body through hip-hop dance and interval circuit training. **Senior Stretching** for individuals 55+ is a low impact class that improves range of motion and decreases the potential for injury.
- **Patrick Henry's Pop-up Rec** is a mobile recreation center which promotes active, healthy lifestyles & social engagement, within the City of Alexandria's west end communities, by activating parks & green spaces with programs. The Pop-up Rec will continue through June and allows residents of all ages to engage in recreational sports, fitness programs, games, crafts & community awareness.

Special Features

- Both the Recreation Manager (Julie Miles) and Recreation Coordinator (London Thomas) have completed the virtual Youth Mental Health First Aid Training. This training will help us to assist both our participants and our staff members in recognizing signs of mental health distress in the youth that we serve as well as guide them to the resources available both within the City of Alexandria and nationally.
- **Old Town Commons HOA** came together and gave away over **15 scholarships to support students for summer camp at Charles Houston**. In speaking with the liaison for the HOA, they are also interested in providing additional resources moving forward to include tutoring and volunteering to assist with any activities or events that Charles Houston puts on. RPCA and the Charles Houston team are greatly appreciative of their generosity and look forward to evolving our newly found partnership.
- **Patrick Henry Recreation Coordinator, Rodney Bates and Regional Program Director, Gladstone Harriott completed the Silver Sneakers "Boom Move" Training.** Both are certified to provide instruction for Silver Sneakers participants. Through their leadership, **Patrick Henry** is now a registered **Silver Sneakers** site. Silver Sneakers is a comprehensive program that improves overall well-being and social aspects. It is designed for all levels and abilities and is typically provided through individuals' health plans at no additional cost.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 20, 2021

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: OSCAR MENDOZA, DIVISION CHIEF - PARK OPERATIONS, RPCA

SUBJECT: PARK OPERATIONS MONTHLY UPDATE

1. PARK AND FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

a. Park Maintenance

- Ben Brenman Park first day of the West End Farmers Market.
- Chinquapin Park Tennis Court. Park staff installed a new bulletin board insert for the Kiosk.
- Staff attended annual turf maintenance training and equipment rodeo provided by Finch Services.

b. Park Facilities Maintenance

- The maintenance team has continued irrigation turn-ons, maintenance, and repairs.
- The maintenance team conducted light inspections and began repairs as needed.

2. URBAN FORESTRY & HORTICULTURE

a. Urban Forestry

- Confirmed Davey Tree Expert Company as its new tree planting contractor.
- Responded to its first large wind event of the growing season.
- Continued hiring process for vacant East District Arborist Position.

b. Horticulture

- Gardeners have been reporting how happy they are with their plots. Their seeds have been planted, and they are waiting anxiously to see what their hard work will bring.



Ben Brenman Park



Chinquapin Park Tennis Court



Finch/Redexim Rodeo

3. NATURAL LANDS MANAGEMENT

a. Invasive Plant Management and Ecological Restoration

- Staff removed Garlic Mustard, Money Plant, Orange Day-lily, Oriental Bittersweet, Porcelain-berry, and other non-native invasive plants from Dora Kelley Nature Park, Chinquapin Park, Forest Park, Timberbranch Parkway, Beverly Park, and Seminary Forest. Staff also sheared back all Poison Ivy along the Chinquapin Nature Trail.
- Staff supervised our contractor our contractor, Invasive Plant Control (IPC), in the removal of Lesser Celandine, English Ivy, Callery Pear, Chinese Elm, Porcelain-berry, Oriental Bittersweet, Bush Honeysuckle, Running Bamboo, and others at Monticello Park, Chinquapin Park, Ben Brenman Park, and South Early Street Park.

b. Cooperative Initiatives

- Staff and volunteers began the implementation of a native pollinator garden, including non-native invasive plant removal work, at Beverly Park.
- On May 6, 2021, City Natural Resource Manager gave a Zoom presentation to the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners on “Right Plant, Right Place and Best Practices in Using Native Plants”. Nearly 100 participants were in attendance.
- Staff continued seasonal monitoring of amphibians in wetland habitats in the City of Alexandria for what will become an annual frog-call survey. The purpose of the survey is to assess the species and abundance of frogs and toads that occur in the City's wetland habitats. Amphibians are important "indicator species" and their presence generally indicates a healthy wetland. In outlying years, volunteers will be recruited and trained to participate in the frog call surveys, and Alexandria will contribute data collected to a nation-wide citizen science project called FrogWatch that is headed by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

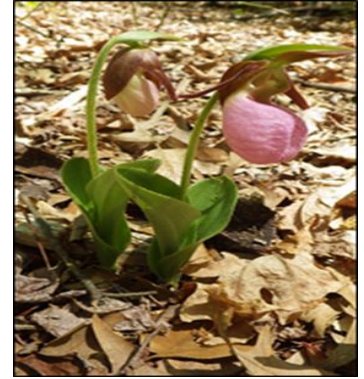
c. Environmental Review

- Nothing to report for the month.

4. JEROME “BUDDIE” FORD NATURE CENTER

a. Programs/Updates:

- The Nature Center had 176 visitors in April and provided 6 impromptu programs for 13 of them. Throughout the month we conducted a total of 18 programs for 316 participants and saw a total of 492 people.



Alexandria critically imperiled Pink Lady's-slipper in bloom at Forest Park



Cockspur Hawthorn in bloom at Tarleton Park



Wild Geranium in bloom at Dora Kelley Nature Park.



Wild Azalea in bloom at Robert Leider Park.

School Programs:

- This month we conducted 8 virtual and 2 on-site programs for local schools. Lyles Crouch Elementary hosted us for two Habitats programs for their 1st grade classes, as well as multiple Life Cycles programs for their 2nd grade classes. Ferdinand Day Elementary hosted us for multiple days of Life Cycles programs for their 2nd grade classes. Additionally, we hosted St Paul's preschool for two days of Senses programs and hikes at the Nature Center. In all we conducted a total of 10 school programs saw a total of 247 students.

Outreach Programs:

- Nature Center educators conducted a total of 7 in-person programs for 3 recreation centers (William Ramsay, Mt Vernon, and Patrick Henry) seeing a total of 56 students and recreation staff. This month's theme was our solar system. Students learned about space and some of NASA's science missions and why they're so important. Students identified the eight planets and other objects orbiting the sun while creating their own pocket solar systems to take home!

Onsite Programs:

- We hosted one public weekend program this month to celebrate Earth Day and the upcoming City Nature Challenge entitled Backyard Nature. We looked at some of the Nature Center's native animal collection and went for a walk through the park. The participants spotted several turtles, a garter snake, and some friendly mallard ducks.

b. Volunteers Hours:

- One Nature Center volunteer worked 16 hours this month assisting with weekly animal health checks and soaks.
- Friends of Dora Kelley Nature Park had a great turn out for the mid-April clean-up in the park. 54 volunteers including individuals, families and local Sheriff deputies participated.

c. Noteworthy:

- The Nature Center has modified its public operating hours. We are now only open on Fridays due to staffing shortage. Public and school programs will continue to run. Programs for recreation centers have been placed on hold until summer.
- The Nature Center is hiring for seasonal environmental educators.
- The Nature Center Manager, Colleen Litzenberger, will be leaving the center effective June 1, 2021. Her husband is



Irrigation repairs at Potomac Yard Park.



Light repairs at Minnie Howard tennis court.



Recreation Center student cutting out planets for their solar system.



A Backyard Nature participant admiring the mallards in the marsh.

active-duty military and they have been re-stationed to Portland, OR. We have been approved to hire in anticipation of this vacancy and will be recruiting during May.

Some of the DKNP clean-up volunteers are pictured below:



City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 20, 2021

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: JACK BROWAND, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR *JB*
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

BETHANY ZNIDERSIC, DIVISION CHIEF *BZ*
PARK PLANNING, CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT & WATERFRONT

ITEM 4: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE
PARK PLANNING, CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT & WATERFRONT

Capital Improvement Project Update

Project Managers: Bethany Znidersic, Acting Division Chief, Capital Development and Jack Browand, Acting Deputy Director

- **Awarded** - Armistead L. Boothe Park Synthetic Field Conversion Project Design Contract
- **Awarded** - James T. Luckett Restroom Construction Contract
- **Awarded** - Nicolas Colasanto Interactive Fountain Design Contract
- **Awarded** - Multi-Court Athletic Light Replacement (William Ramsay & Armistead Boothe)
- **Awarded** - Swimming Pools Maintenance and Repairs ITB
- **Awarded** - Fort Ward Park Picnic Shelter ADA Access Construction ITB
- **Awarded** - Tree Planting Invitation to Bid
- **In Progress** - Landover Park ADA Access Ramp design
- **In Progress** - Fence Installation, Repair and Removal ITB
- **In Progress** - Landscape Architect of Record Request for Qualifications (RFQU)
- **In Progress** - Architectural Engineering for Eugene Simpson Stadium Park – Ball Fields Renovation (RFQU)
- **In Progress** - Holmes Run Trail Flood Damage Repair Design (RFQU)
- **Submitted** - Fort Ward Park Playground Renovation Construction ITB
- **Submitted** - Chinquapin Park Playground Renovation (RFQU)
- **Submitted** - Powhatan Park Renovation (RFQU)

Small Area Plan & ACPS Modernization Coordination:

- Landmark Mall
- Eisenhower East
- Potomac Yard North
- Arlandria-Chirilagua
- High School Project – Minnie Howard Campus
- Douglass MacArthur Elementary School

Community Matching Fund Update

Project Managers: Judy Lo, Acting Principal Planner, Park Planning and Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner II, Park Planning

City Council approved full funding for FY 2022. The FY 2022 submission period is open through June 25, 2021. Visit [City of Alexandria Accepts Applications for FY 2022 Community Matching Fund](#) for additional information.

Armistead L. Boothe Park Synthetic Field Conversion Project

Project Managers: Bethany Znidersic, Acting Division Chief, Park Planning and Jack Browand, Acting Deputy Director

The Field Replacement project will convert the existing natural turf field to a full synthetic turf diamond field with synthetic turf overlay rectangular field. In addition, the project will include upgrades to the field lighting, dugouts, warm up areas, batting cages, spectator seating, scoreboard, and scorers' table. The site has several environmental constraints, including the floodplain and two Resource Protection Areas (RPA). While the project is unable to remove all encroachments from the 100-foot buffer of the southern RPA, the proposed plan does create a 50-foot buffer from the footprint of the existing field and will remove all existing impervious surfaces out of the 100-foot buffer on the western RPA. A special exception granted by the Planning Commission will be necessary to permit the field within the RPA. The RPA Exception Request will be presented to the Environmental Policy Commission on May 17.

Armistead L. Boothe Park Court Lighting Replacement Update

Project Manager: Daniel Unkle, Urban Planner II, Capital Development

The existing pole lights at the tennis court and basketball court will be removed and replaced with a modern energy savings LED lighting system. Additional repairs will be needed to the court surfacing as part of this project. Permits for the project are still pending, work is anticipated to take place late May – June. The courts will be closed for a portion of the project.

Chinquapin Recreation Center and Park Parking Lot Renovation

Project Managers: Daniel Unkle, Urban Planner II, Capital Development

Parking lot #3 will receive improvements this summer. Starting in late May the existing wood retaining wall will be removed and replaced with a new wood retaining wall. In June the parking lot will be milled and repaved followed by new stripping. The parking lot will be closed for the milling and repaving portion of the project.

Eugene Simpson Stadium Park Renovation

Project Manager: Bethany Znidersic, Acting Division Chief, Park Planning

Eugene Simpson Stadium Park is one of the six parks in the 2014 Citywide Parks Improvements Plan. A capital improvement program (CIP) project is scheduled in FY2022 and FY2023 to address the Plan recommendations for both diamond fields, parking, picnic areas, ADA, stormwater and site circulation. A solicitation for the project design team is currently in progress. The project will include a community engagement process after the design team is selected.

Ewald Park Temporary Traffic Garden

Project Manager: Christine Mayeur, Complete Streets Program Manager, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

The Department of Environmental Services will work with community volunteers to install a temporary 'Pop-Up' Traffic Garden in Ewald Park on the footprint of the recently demolished pool and pool house. The work is anticipated to be complete in 2-3 days and will be scheduled in mid-May. The

temporary traffic garden will provide additional recreation opportunities in Ewald Park. A redesign process for the park is anticipated to kick-off in FY2022.

Joseph Hensley Park Renovation

Project Managers: Bethany Znidersic, Acting Division Chief, Park Planning and Jack Browand, Acting Deputy Director

Joseph Hensley Park will be renovated to address the recommendations of the Citywide Parks Improvement Plan as created in 2014 and amended in 2021. The park design is currently at 90% plans and the renovation will be constructed in two phases. Construction of Phase I is anticipated to start in 2022. On May 5, 2021, City Council added \$3.2 million to the Phase I budget. Funding will be available in FY2022 and will allow the City to move additional improvements from Phase II to Phase I. City staff will work with the design consultant to finalize the list of improvements to add to Phase I based on constructability.

Landover Park Playground Retaining Wall

Project Managers: Daniel Unkle, Urban Planner II, Capital Development

The retaining wall/seal wall project started in early May. This new 40 foot long concrete wall will help with drainage and erosions issues in the park while adding additional seating to the playground. Work is anticipated to be completed in late May. A portion of the playground is closed during the project for safety.

Mount Vernon Elementary School and Recreation Center Ballfield Renovation

Project Manager: Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief, Park Maintenance

The Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities has contracted with Premier Sport Fields and Hydro-Tech Irrigation to renovate the Mount Vernon Elementary School & Recreation Center ballfield (2701 Commonwealth Ave.). The project work began Monday, May 3 and work will occur Monday through Friday from approximately 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Work planned includes the restoration of approximately 39,600 square feet turf, regrading and the installation of irrigation. The work area will be closed to the public during the installation period. Following the installation, the area will remain closed for approximately two months to allow for turf establishment.

Open Space Steering Committee Update

Project Managers: Judy Lo, Acting Principal Planner, Park Planning and Ana Vicinanzo, Urban Planner II, Park Planning

The Open Space Steering Committee continues to work with staff on Task 1 of the Policy Plan. At the March 30 meeting, staff presented information on the proposed FY22 open space budget and reviewed recommendations for public access easements. The Committee also discussed changes to the current park typologies list. Staff provided information on the future Public Open Space zoning text amendment process. For more information about the Open Space Policy Plan and the planning process, visit: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/89491>.

William Ramsay Multi-Purpose Court Lighting Replacement

Project Manager: Daniel Unkle, Urban Planner II, Capital Development

This project will replace the existing tennis/futsal court lights at the William Ramsay Recreation Center with a modern LED pole lighting system. The project is currently under construction and work is anticipated to be completed in mid-May.

May 20, 2021 Discussion Items

- **Four Mile Run Stream Dredging T&ES (July-December 2021)**
 - Brian Rahal, Civil Engineer IV, T&ES
RPCA Liaisons: Jack Browand, Acting Deputy Director and Bob Williams, Division Chief
- **Arlandria-Chirilagua Plan (ACPU) Open Space**
 - Jose Ayala, Principal Planner, P&Z
 - Carrie Beach, Division Chief, P&Z
RPCA Liaisons: Jack Browand, Acting Deputy Director; Judy Lo, Acting Principal Planner; & Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner II

Rain Gauge Placements – City Parks and schools

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  #1 |  #2 | <p>NEW RAIN GAUGE'S FOR WATER LEVEL MONITORING NETWORK WITHIN PARK' SITES</p> <p>05-14-2021</p> <p>1-DUKE ST AT TAYLOR RUN 2-BEACH PARK 3-HOOFFS RUN PARK 4-WINDMILL HILL PARK</p>  |
|  #3 |  #4 | |
|  #1 |  #2 | <p>NEW RAIN GAUGE'S FOR WATER LEVEL MONITORING NETWORK WITHIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS' SITES</p> <p>05-14-2021</p> <p>1-GEORGE MASON E.S. 2-MOUNT VERNON E.S. 3-CHARLES BARRETT E.S 4-FRANCIS HAMMOND M.S.</p>  |
|  #3 |  #4 | |